

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BRUSSE 07430 171551Z
ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
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S E C R E T BRUSSELS 07430

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PARM, NATO, SALT, BE
SUBJECT: NON-CIRCUMVENTION - BELGIAN VIEWS REITERATED AND
EXPANDED

REF: BRUSSELS 6368

SUMMARY: FOREIGN MINISTRY DIRECTOR OF NATO AFFAIRS,
ERIK BAL, AND DISARMAMENT AFFAIRS OFFICER, PIERRE
CHAMPENOIS, CALLED US TO FOREIGN MINISTRY ON APRIL
17 TO REITERATE AND EXPAND UPON PRELIMINARY BELGIAN
REACTIONS TO NEXT STEPS ON NON-CIRCUMVENTION
REPORTED REFTEL. END SUMMARY.

I. THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS AND VIEWS WERE GIVEN TO US.
THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT HAS JOINED IN THE GENERAL
CONSENSUS EXPRESSED AT NATO ON THE NON-CIRCUMVENTION
CLAUSE AND AGREES TO THE U.S. STRATEGY OF USING
FALLBACK LANGUAGE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS AT A TIME TO
BE DETERMINED BY THE USG.WHILE EXPRESSING FULL
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SOLIDARITY WITH THE U.S. ON THIS MATTER, THE BELGIAN
GOVERNMENT DOES HAVE CERTAIN DOUBTS AND ANXIETIES
ON THE FORMULA.

2. BAL AND CHAMPENOIS REITERATED THE POINTS
REPORTED PARA 3 REFTEL, PARTICULARLY POINTS B AND
C. THEY EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER THE USE OF THE

PHRASE "OR POLITICAL GROUNDS" IN THE THIRD TALKING POINT TRANSMITTED IN PARA 4, STATE 69375. BAL COMMENTED THAT AFTER THE RECENT BREZHNEV LETTER ON ERW AND THE RECENT PRAVDA ARTICLE ON NON-CIRCUMVENTION, IT WAS ALMOST A CERTAINTY THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD CONTINUE TO TRY TO FIND POLITICAL GROUNDS ON WHICH TO DIVIDE THE ALLIES. BAL REVIEWED THE HISTORY OF SOVIET OBJECTIONS TO UNILATERAL EXPLANATORY AND INTERPRETIVE STATEMENTS ON DOCUMENTS AGREED TO IN EAST-WEST NEGOTIATIONS. HE CALLED OUR ATTENTION TO THE POSSIBLE DANGERS IN AN INTERPRETIVE CLAUSE WHICH WOULD BE USED WITH CONGRESS. BAL SAID THAT THE BELGIANS SAW POTENTIAL DANGERS IN BEING TOO PRECISE AND THEMSELVES WOULD OPT FOR A MORE GENERAL APPROACH.

3. BAL ALSO SIGNALLED BELGIUM'S INTEREST IN HAVING PRIOR CONSULTATION WITHIN NATO ON THE PUBLIC DECLARATION IN ORDER FOR THE ALLIES TO HAVE A COMPLETELY CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT WOULD AND WHAT WOULD NOT BE PERMITTED UNDER THE FORMULATION IN THE FOURTH TALKING POINT IN PARA 4 STATE 69375.
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